
Title: The Watcher (part 2)

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She could not bring
herself to raise her voice
to the old one again; his
pain at witnessing the
slaughter of two races in
his dreams for thousands
of years was enough
punishment. It seemed he
had been spared from his
own crime by Exodus'
plot. "But the Meer...
what became of our
people, Adranath? Are we
the last of our race?"

"The time has come!" He
stood quickly and smiled
once more. "Come, come
child! You have returned
to us and now the time
of the awakening is at
hand!"

He took her hand and
helped her rise and
immediately began walking
away at a brisk pace.
With nothing else to
guide her actions in this
strange place, she
followed him, unsure of
what awaited her. They
walked in silence for
nearly an hour until they
reached the base of the
mountains, a small clearing
in the grass not far
away from the Juka
fortress she had barely
escaped days earlier.
Adranath moved his hands
in complicated arcs and
small motes of light fell
from him like dust. He
clapped his hands together
and the lights fell to the
ground and swirled
together forming one

bright point. The light
spread along the ground
and formed the shape of
a square stone platform
before it faded. A
platform of polished wood
with what seemed to be
blink runes was fitted
into the top of the
neatly carved rock.

"Come." Adranath offered
Dasha his hand, which she
suspiciously took. Together
they stepped onto the
wooden platform and
vanished. When they
reappeared Dasha could
see that they were in
some sort of crypt.
Tombs in rows stretched
on from one end of the
massive chamber to the
other with small dots of
torchlight burning
throughout. It was obvious
Meer had built this place,
but she had never seen
it before.

What is this place?
These are not death
tombs, Adranath."

"No, child. It was the only
way we could follow. The
sleep of eternity holds
the Meer here." He
walked through the
chamber to a tomb whose
lid had not been sealed.
"But someone had to
stay. Someone had to
watch for the Juka." He
turned to her. "The duty
was mine. After what I
had done... what I had
once done and was
undone... I had to atone."

"You have been watching
and waiting... for
thousands of years?!" She
understood the madness
that now seemed to
plague the old eternal.
After centuries and
centuries of seclusion in

this land he had lost a
bit of his composure.
Eternals would exist
forever but in solitude
even an immortal mind
had to suffer over such
a great expanse of time.
"The Meer gave up their
home so that we could
wait for the time when
the struggle for balance
could begin anew. The
fortress has returned.
The Juka have returned.
You, my child, you have
returned." He turned in a
full circle, taking in the
hundreds of tombs that
had waited for him for
endless centuries. His
task was now complete.
"Now rise, my people! Rise
and continue the fight!"

He slammed his staff
down onto the floor and
held his hand aloft. A
bright blue light shot
forth from his fingertips
and enveloped the entire
room in its glow. Dasha
shielded her eyes slightly
and looked back and forth
as the light bathed every
surface and faded. At
first it was imperceptible
but bit-by-bit the sounds
of movement could be
heard. Beside her, a tomb
cracked open and the lid
drifted aside. Another
eternal rose from the
sarcophagus and turned to
meet her gaze.
"Dasha! Upon awakening I
could have hoped to see
nothing so wonderful as
the sight of you returned
to your people!" Dasha
could only stare in
amazement. The entire
race had slept for
centuries here so that
they may once again
devote themselves to the
balance. All was not lost.

"Watcher, you have done

well." The eternal said to Adranath. "Your devotion has saved us all and we are in your debt."

Adranath turned to Dasha, the look of a frightened child on his face. "I... am I forgiven, Dasha? After all I have done, all that I would have done... all of this that has occurred... I can be the only one to blame. Had I not been such a hasty fool in that time, we would not have had to bring ourselves to this new world. After all this time... have I been redeemed?"

She smiled and took his hand gently. "You once told me that wisdom accepts the inevitability of change."

One by one, the tombs opened and an entire race awoke from their sleep.